

Stone Soup Training Module: Sustaining the AmeriCorps*VISTA Experience



Participant's Guide





Icebreaker: Weaving a Web

Purpose:

This icebreaker is a good opportunity for participants to get to know one another's talents, projects, service concerns and desires.

Major Themes:

- ❖ Sustainability means building a network of resources.
- ❖ Bartering can be an important tool for bringing together resources you need for your project.
- ❖ Fellow VISTA projects/staff are excellent resources of information and materials. You aren't alone in your VISTA experience; there are lots of people and resources out there to assist you.

Please complete the following statements on your index cards:

- ❖ On the first index card, please write three talents or resources that you and/or your organization/host community have. Think about talents or resources that you have that you can barter with other community organizations or individuals. Some examples are: you are a great grant writer, you can juggle, your nonprofit has a lending library with 1,000 books in it, etc.
- ❖ On the second card please write one challenge you face this year with your project and name at least two resources that would help you overcome this challenge.
- ❖ On the third card please complete the following sentence, "The footprint I want to leave in my community is..."



Getting into the Mix

Purpose: This session illustrates sustainability and how it relates to the VISTA experience.

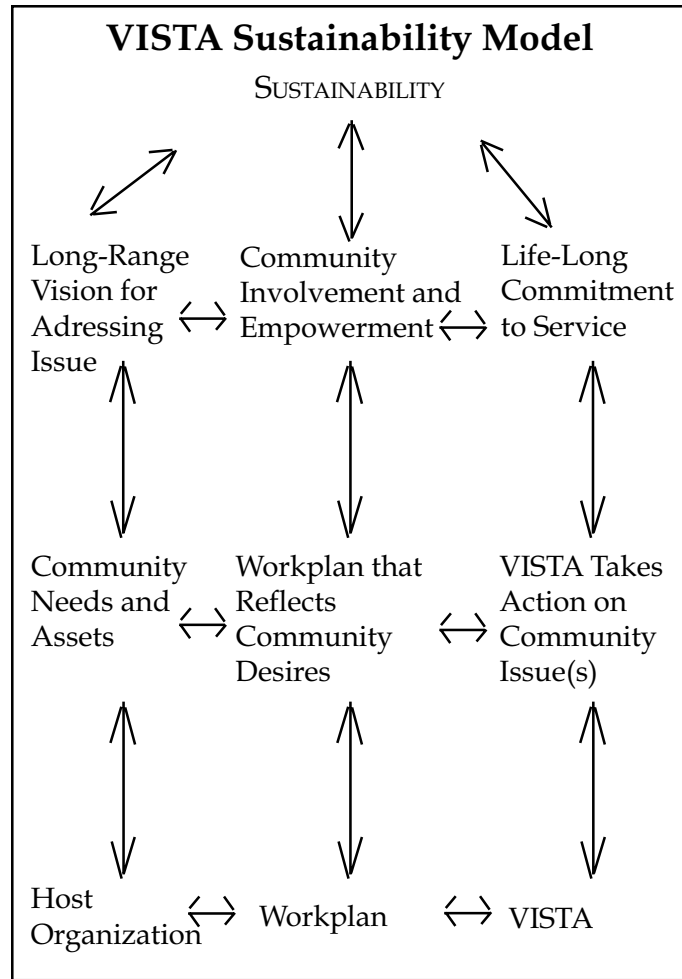
Major Themes:

- ❖ Duality of sustainability (both for projects and VISTAs)
- ❖ Illustration of how the VISTA, the project workplan and the host site must all work together to achieve sustainability.
- ❖ VISTAs as catalysts for social change.

The Story of Stone Soup

A hungry peddler comes upon a town in famine. While looking for a place to have dinner the peddler meets up with the town blacksmith. When the peddler asks where he might partake in a meal, the blacksmith said "You'll find no food here, all the townspeople have hoarded their food and will not share with one another, especially not a stranger." To this the peddler declared that he had all the ingredients for a wonderful meal and that he would cook for the famine-ridden town. The peddler asked if he could borrow a kettle from the blacksmith and began to build a fire. When the blacksmith returned with the kettle they filled it with water and waited for it to boil. When the water began to boil the peddler reached deep into his coat pocket and pulled out a simple stone. He dropped the stone into the kettle of boiling water and leaned over the kettle and sniffed the air, licked his lips and declared that this was to be one of the best batches of stone soup he ever made. The townspeople began to gather around the kettle to see what this peddler was cooking up. Curiosity and hunger broke the silence of one townsman who said, "Stone soup is good, but it's even better with potatoes." Another villager shouted out, "What you really needed are quality carrots." And with that the villagers went to their respective homes, brought out the best food in their cabinets and dropped it in the pot. After all of the villagers had eaten the marvelous stone soup, they offered to purchase the stone. The peddler replied that he couldn't take money for the stone and left it for the townspeople. Years after the famine had passed, villagers could still be heard bragging about how wonderful their community's stone soup was.

~Old Russian Folk Tale



American Heritage Dictionary definition of sustainability: 1. To keep in existence; maintain. 2. To supply with necessities or nourishment; provide for. 3. To support from below; prop. 4. To support the spirits, vitality, or resolution of; encourage. 5. To affirm the validity or justice of. 6. To prove or corroborate; confirm.

American Heritage Dictionary definition of vista: 1. A distant view seen through an opening. A comprehensive awareness of a series of remembered, present or anticipated events.





Making Out the Menu: Two Tales of Sustainability

Purpose:

This session illustrates how sustainability was addressed in two VISTA projects, one where sustainability occurred and one where it did not. Both stories are based on strategies used by former VISTAs projects.

Major Themes:

- ❖ The importance of the workplan
- ❖ Communication between VISTAs, site supervisor and state office staff.
- ❖ The impact of achieving or not achieving sustainability can have upon a community.

Sandy Beach Housing Corporation

Cast of Characters:

Gwen: Acting Director of Sandy Beach Housing Corporation

John: Locally Recruited VISTA

Penny: Nationally Recruited VISTA

Phyllis: Sandy Beach Housing Corporation Secretary

Located in a small town in the rural Northeast, Sandy Beach Housing Corporation's (SBC) mission is to provide quality housing opportunities to the low-income residents of a three-county area. Recently, SBC has gone through some administrative changes. The executive director of twenty years retired, the office manager took a job with a local bank and the board chair stepped down because the time commitment was becoming too much of a strain on him. With several large housing grants pending and the construction of ten new housing units, SBC faced lots of interesting work.

When the acting director, Gwen, took over, she had several new projects that she wanted SBC to take on. One of the first applications Gwen submitted was to AmeriCorps*VISTA. SBC applied for three VISTAs: one economic development coordinator, one community outreach coordinator and one volunteer coordinator. The goal of the VISTA grant was develop an economic development program for SBC's clients. SBC was new to small-business ventures but Gwen felt it was important for SBC to diversify its activities.

SBC recruited two VISTAs, one national and one local to fill two of the slots; the third slot remained unfilled. When the VISTAs, John and Penny, started Gwen was away at a housing training and so the SBC secretary, Phyllis, told the VISTAs to take the first week they were in town to "settle in."

When Gwen returned, she met with the VISTAs and reviewed some of the upcoming SBC projects. There were a couple of grants due, SBC's annual fundraiser to organize and an annual report to write, publish and distribute. Gwen told the VISTAs that because SBC was low on staff right now that she'd really appreciate it if they could pitch in and help out until they were able to increase staff. John and Penny agreed and split the project work for the annual report, the logistics for the fundraiser and drafting two of the grants.

When John and Penny asked Gwen when they might have access to a computer and phone, they were told to share with the Phyllis and, "If you do well with that application to the Lagios Foundation, we'll be able to purchase a new computer and put in another phone line!"

That afternoon Penny and John sat down to try and organize their work. Penny would draft the grants and find entertainment for the fundraiser. John said he would take on the fundraiser raffle, draft and find a printer for the annual report.

John and Penny asked Phyllis where they could find past annual reports and grants so that they could get a sense of what SBC had done before. Phyllis found a few grant applications for housing projects (the two grants Penny was working on were for small business) and an annual report from 1996. Working with what she had Penny drafted two grant proposals, John edited them and then they submitted them to Gwen. When Gwen had a chance to review the grants she said "Nice first draft, but I don't think the grants capture what we are trying to accomplish with



our micro-enterprise program.” When Penny asked for some suggestions and direction about how she could revise the grants, Gwen told her that she didn’t have time to go over it with her this week and that she should be focusing her efforts on the SBC fundraiser. Penny put the grants aside and went in search of band for the fundraiser.

John had a similar experience when he met with Gwen to talk about the fundraiser and the annual report. He told Gwen he was finding it difficult to elicit donations for the fundraiser raffle because he often didn’t have access to a phone. He said his big accomplishment was getting a local restaurant to donate a gourmet meal for four. Gwen was annoyed that John had gone to the restaurant owners because they were large donors to SBC and said it wasn’t appropriate to ask them to donate additional goods. Gwen picked up the phone, called the restaurant owners and apologized for the request, citing that, “John is a new volunteer and doesn’t know better.”

Disappointed but not deterred, the VISTAs continued to work on their projects. Penny found a local band to play at the fundraiser and John finished a draft of the annual report and had twenty items donated for the raffle. Both John and Gwen attended the fundraiser and had a chance to meet community members who were involved in SBC activities. The typical questions from the evening were “What’s a VISTA?” or “Are you taking over the office manager’s position?” At the end of the night, SBC had raised \$5,000 from raffle and dinner ticket sales. John and Penny were thrilled that their hard work had helped SBC.

Over the weekend, one of SBC’s housing units had major water damage and five families were without homes. Gwen called John and Penny and asked them to help with clean up and to try and find temporary housing for the families. John and Penny spent the next week tracking down housing options for the families, getting food and clothing to them, helping with insurance claims, and finding furniture for the families. At the end of the week all of the families were situated in temporary housing and had their basic needs met. The following Monday, Penny realized that one of the grants was due by the end of the week. She spent two days trying to get an appointment with Gwen and when they did meet Gwen said she would review the drafts and get back to her. On Friday morning Gwen rushed into the office and told John, Phyllis and Penny to drop everything. “We need to re-do the grant and get it to the post office by five o’clock and if we run later, someone



can drive to Federal Express in the city and we'll have until ten o'clock." Gwen said as she rushed to find the latest draft of Penny's grant on her desk. For the next eleven hours everyone in the office ran around copying material, tracking down board members for signatures, calling local agencies for letters of support and revising the program goals for the micro-enterprise program. Penny took the grant to Federal Express, paid the mailing charges with her own money and headed home.

The next month was challenging for the VISTAs. When a crisis arose they had lots of work to do but when there wasn't a crisis they didn't have any specific projects to work on. They tried meeting with Gwen who was very busy with a capital campaign and didn't have a lot of time to give to give them. When she did meet with them she told them, "Hang in there, when we get those grants, we'll have lots of work to do!"

When it came time to write the first quarterly report, Gwen asked the VISTAs to draft it. As they reviewed the AmeriCorps grant material they realized that the report was based on a workplan for their project which they had never seen. Both John and Penny were unhappy with their placement and decided that they would meet with Gwen to discuss their concerns. Gwen canceled the meeting twice because of other obligations, and when she was able to meet with the VISTAs they were fired up. "Why has it taken two and a half months to see this workplan?" John asked. "This workplan doesn't even mention grant writing!" said Penny. Gwen was surprised by the VISTAs' reaction and said that she would take some time to review the workplan and come up with projects for them to work on.

The following week Gwen gave the VISTAs a list of projects for the economic development program. The two projects Gwen wanted the VISTAs to work on were to run an interest session to find out how many local residents might be interested in participating in the program and to find local business people who would be willing to serve as mentors for the project. John and Penny went to work organizing advertising an information session and began contacting local business people to find out if they would participate. Fifteen residents showed up for the meeting and were very interested in the potential of the program. Some residents began asking if SBC could help them get computers or if they could help with small loans and others, current business owners, wanted to know if this kind of work was going to affect their business. John and Penny took notes and asked if residents would be willing to attend a follow-up meeting to discuss their



concerns and questions and update them on the progress of the economic development program. After the meeting Gwen said that John and Penny should hold off on the next meeting until they found out whether or not they had won the economic development grant funds.

For the next month, the VISTAs continued to do crisis work here and there and Gwen continued to rush around trying to manage all of the SBC projects. Just before Thanksgiving SBC received word that they had not been awarded either economic development grant. At this point, John and Penny decided to call the state office and resign. The state program officer, Ken, was surprised by their decision because this was the first he had heard of their concerns. Ken offered to do a site visit and meet with Gwen, but both of the VISTAs felt that they were too disenchanted with SBC to stay.

Penny decided to take another VISTA position at a literacy project in California; John stayed in town and was accepted at the local college for a degree in business.

Gwen was named permanent executive director of the Sandy Beach Corporation and is thinking of applying for RSVP volunteers to help out with office work. The economic development program was never pursued further.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ❖ How did this story make you feel? or How do you think the VISTAs felt in this situation?
- ❖ What impact does a project that isn't sustained have upon a community, a host organization and the VISTAs?
- ❖ How might the situation have been changed? What could the supervisor or the VISTAs done to have improved the situation?



Yates Literacy Council

Cast Of Characters:

Stephen: Yates Literacy council's Executive Director

Carlos: Locally recruited VISTA

Susan: Locally Recruited VISTA

Ed: Nationally Recruited VISTA

Penny: Nationally Recruited VISTA

Jenn: Stephen's Replacement

Carla: Ed's Mentor

Yates Literacy Council (YLC) is located in Morrison, a suburb of San Francisco. Established fifty years ago to help immigrants increase their language skills, YLC has expanded its efforts to include tutoring programs for children, citizenship classes and job readiness programs. YLC's director of the past five years, Stephen, applied for a VISTA grant to expand YLC's tutoring program so that each of the five local schools in the district would have their own site-based program. Stephen applied for four VISTAs: two program coordinators, one grant writer and one volunteer coordinator to help implement these "satellite sites." Two local people, Carlos and Susan, were recruited as VISTAs and two national recruits Ed and Penny, who had transferred there from Sandy Beach.

When the VISTAs arrived, Stephen ran a week-long orientation program for them. The orientation included an overview of YLC's history, programs and administrative policies, a tour of Morrison, an interagency nonprofit meeting, an intercorps council meeting with other local AmeriCorps members, a client panel where participants discussed their experience with YLC, a meeting with school administrators and reading teachers and a day when VISTAs reviewed the goals and objectives of their workplans and discussed expectations, roles and responsibilities. The week ended with a dinner with board members and YLC volunteers. At the dinner, VISTA was assigned to a mentor whose role was to introduce the VISTA to the community and help the VISTAs with their project.

Penny and Ed, the nationally recruited VISTAs who had relocated to serve, spent some time with their mentors finding affordable apartments, learning where to



shop and bank and generally getting the lay of the land. Over the next month all of the VISTAs were encouraged to attend a series of community events from the Morrison Elk's Club Chili Cook-off to the local peewee soccer tournament. At these events, VISTAs met community leaders and learned a great deal about how the town felt about YLC and its programs.

During weekly VISTA staff meetings Stephen reviewed the progress of the VISTAs on their individual projects and assessed what resources they needed and wanted. In the second VISTA meeting Stephen addressed the issue of sustainability by talking with the VISTAs about what they want their projects to look like in a year. "Who is going to participate? Who is going to run it? How is it going to be? These are questions you should be asking yourself daily," said Stephen. "The goal is to work yourself out of a job. I know that might sound odd, but you need to make sure there are resources and networks in place before you go so that all of your work doesn't end when you leave. The other thing you need to think about is what you need to be effective this year. It's important that you let me know what resources you need to so that you can complete your workplan." Over the next week each of the VISTAs thought about what type of training and resources they thought would be helpful to them. Carlos wanted to attend a grant-writing seminar, Penny found a nonprofit program development workshop offered by a national technical assistance provider, Ed wanted to attend a literacy conference in San Francisco and Susan decided to take Spanish lessons at the Morrison Community College. Stephen worked with each VISTA to make it possible to participate in these events.

YLC's office manager became rather ill and had to take a medical leave from work. In his absence, each of the YLC staff members was asked to take a shift covering the phones and helping with clerical duties. In the staff meeting Stephen asked if each VISTA would be willing to cover a slot, noting that he was covering the Wednesday 1-2:30 p.m. slot and Friday 9-10 a.m.. Penny was hesitant at first to do this when she worked at Sandy Beach she often had to do clerical work and it often wound up taking up all of her time. Penny was really excited about the satellite program the VISTAs were developing and didn't want her year to be detoured by office coverage. After the meeting she voiced her concerns to Stephen, "You know I'm feeling like this year is going by really quickly and I'm concerned that I have enough



time to do the work laid out in my workplan. Is office coverage necessary for the VISTAs?" Stephen thought for a moment and replied, "I appreciate your concern and commitment. A year is a short time to take on such a project. Office coverage isn't mandatory but it would help out. If you feel you have the time to cover a slot that would be great. If you don't have the time I'll respect your decision." Penny took one slot on Thursdays for the month duration of the office manager's leave and wound up getting to know several staff members better and learning the office filing, phone and computer system. She thought this wasn't the preferred way of doing things but she was glad she could help out and that it didn't last long.

Setting up the school-based satellite programs was going really well. Carlos, the fundraiser, had met with a local foundation that had donated \$1,000 to get the programs started. A large bookstore chain offered ten boxes of remaindered books that the VISTAs thought might be useful to their project and his mentor, the head of the local Kiwanis Club offered the proceeds of their Christmas tree sales to the project. Susan, the volunteer coordinator, was organizing a volunteer fair and was in the process of designing a volunteer program that would suit YLC's needs. Penny and Ed were working together to find space in each of the five schools and to develop a program schedule for the schools. They had bimonthly meetings with the high school principals and reading teachers to update them on the progress of the program.

As the weeks progressed the VISTAs really got to know one another's talents and strengths. When Ed commented that one of the school satellite rooms was really dull and depressing Susan chimed in "Well, I used to paint murals. What do you think about me painting something in the room?" In a staff meeting Carlos said he was feeling as if he was always begging for money and that he was afraid that any time a community member saw him they thought that he would ask them for a donation and run the other way. Penny said that she'd like to try a little fundraising and put some of the skills she learned in the community development workshop into practice. Carlos, an avid rollerblader, befriended a group of teen skaters and convinced them that they should sign up as YLC volunteers. He made it "cool" to volunteer and increased Susan's volunteer base by fifteen members.



Stephen set up a mid-year evaluation meeting with each of the VISTAs to find out where the VISTAs were with their projects, what resources they needed, review and re-evaluate the goals and objectives in the workplan and to find out what each of the VISTAs planned on doing after their service year. The first question Stephen asked was, “What are you doing as far as sustaining your project?” Carlos had found three funders to make five-year commitment to the satellite program. Susan said she had drafted a training manual and developed a volunteer database so that YLC staff members or a lead volunteer could run the program if need be. Ed and Penny said that they were working with each of the schools to formalize the partnerships to develop a long-range vision for the program—one that did not include VISTAs. The other question Stephen asked was “What are you thinking about doing after your service year is over?” None of the VISTAs had a clear idea of what they wanted to do so Stephen suggested that they tap into a partnership he had set up with the career services office at the local college. One of the career counselors offered to meet with each of the VISTAs to set up a post-service plan of action. The career center was willing to let the VISTAs use their library, let them attend career fairs and followed up with calls and meetings as needed.

In a staff meeting two months before the grand opening of the satellite schools, Stephen told the VISTAs that he had been offered a job at a local foundation. “It’s a great opportunity, I can really help the nonprofit community in this position—I just can’t turn it down,” he said. Stephen told the VISTAs that YLC’s assistant director, Jenn, would be taking over supervision of the VISTA program. Stephen said that he would give her an orientation to the VISTA projects and would appreciate the VISTAs input and participation in the process. While the VISTAs were disappointed by Stephen’s departure, they understood his decision and immediately started thinking of a proposal that they could submit to the foundation as soon as he started.

The week before Stephen left, Ed received a call from his father saying that his mother was very ill and he was needed at home. Ed’s family owned a small hardware store in Florida. With his mother ill they really needed Ed to come back and help out. Stephen and Jenn worked with the state office to arrange for Ed’s trip home and to close out his service. At Ed’s going away party, Ed’s mentor



Carla, said, “In a short time you’ve done so much for us. I hope that you’ll always consider Morrison a second home. Thank you for your service.” The other VISTAs presented Ed with a box of macaroni and cheese and a can of beans so he wouldn’t forget the staple VISTA diet.

Jenn’s first week as the VISTA supervisor was a challenging one. The satellite school sites were a month away from opening and there was a lot of work to do. The VISTAs’ morale was low because of Ed and Stephen leaving. Jenn decided to have a staff retreat and closed the office for a day and took everyone to a conference facility owned by the college. The staff spent the morning doing team-building activities and in the afternoon they developed a team strategy for the next six months of projects. In her journal that night, Penny wrote, “I learned a lot about leadership skills today. The ropes course was really challenging but by the end of it my trust and respect for the staff grew so much. The whole experience taught me a lot about program management and the importance of overcoming my fears and finding constructive solutions to challenging situations. I miss Stephen and Ed, but I know the program will go on without them. It’s a good reminder to know what a gap not having them here makes in the program. In four months I won’t be here any more and I want to make sure the satellite programs are up and running and that they won’t rely on me in to continue. All in all a good day – free pizza, feeling a part of a team and knowing what the difference our program is going to make in Morrison. It doesn’t get much better than this.”

The satellite programs opened with great fanfare. At the open house to kick off the beginning of the programs one of the school principals said, “This is our community at its best. We appreciate the work of the VISTAs and of the marvelous partnerships they’ve created to make the literacy satellite programs a reality.”

For the next four months the VISTAs were busy running tutor training programs, tracking down donations, working with the media and running the satellite programs. At the end of the year, Carlos was hired by YLC, Susan went back to school and Penny decided to do another year of service as an AmeriCorps Leader. In her final report to YLC she wrote “Serving as an AmeriCorps*VISTA member has given me a confidence in my abilities to coordinate community-based projects. It’s given me the practical, hands-on experience that I would not have gained at an



entry-level position directly out of college. I've been able to take charge of my own projects and to put the skills and knowledge I gained in school to use; I've proven to myself that I can transfer my knowledge into action."

The Morrison satellite program has been running now for seven years. The first three years the VISTAs served as program developer, during which time money was raised to hire a full-time staff member to administer the program and a part-time volunteer coordinator. The program has now served more than 2,000 students in the town of Morrison.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ❖ How is this story different from Sandy Beach?
- ❖ What role does a community play in ensuring sustainability?
- ❖ What are some of the reasons the Yates program was successful?





The Right Ingredients: Wisdom from the Field

Purpose:

The Right Ingredients activity is based on lessons current and former volunteers have shared about their service experience. The wisdom activity illustrates the fundamental community development principles around the sustainability model—showing the important connections between VISTA, the workplan and the host organization.

Major Themes:

- ❖ Importance of merging the one-year VISTA service commitment to the host community's long-range vision.
- ❖ What happens to a community when you don't build a sustainable project—negative impact of short-sighted community programming.
- ❖ Ensuring community buy-in and involvement with the workplan.
- ❖ VISTAs using the time in service to find out about themselves and build a vision of what type of a community member/leader each would like to be.

VISTA

New Perspective

Know Yourself

Be Yourself

Listening

Pancake Breakfast Community Development

The Frustration Is the Education

The Happiness Factor

Build Your Soapbox

You Get What You Give

Sustaining Service



The Workplan

Community Ecology

The Two-Person Rule of Thumb

Direct vs. Indirect Service

Talents and Interests

VISTA Vision

Balance

Don't Reinvent the Wheel

Flexibility

Bringing People to the Table

You Come on the Shoulders of Others



Host Site & Community

Gate Keepers

Community Education and Empowerment

Progressive Responsibility

The Invisible VISTA

Partnerships

Thanks Yous

Trust





Finding the Kettle that Works for You : Dot Activity

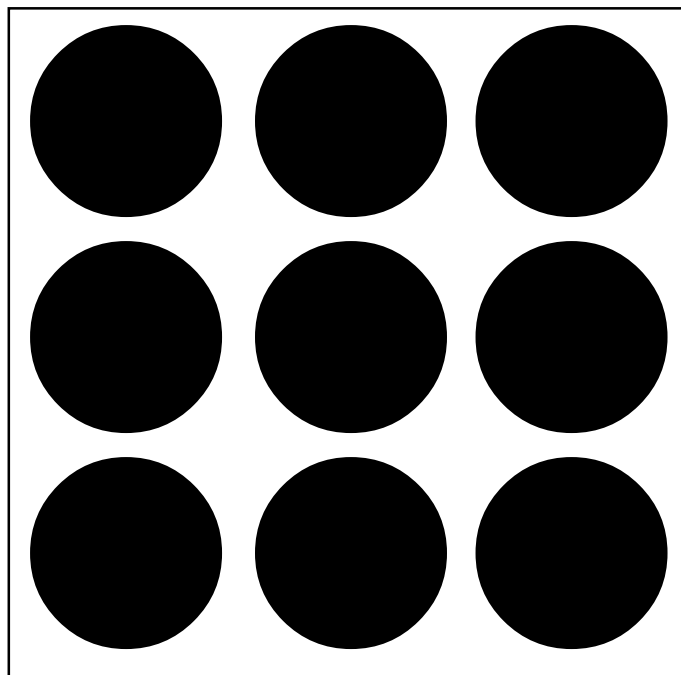
Purpose:

This activity illustrates the concept of paradigms and how they influence our problem-solving skills.

Major Themes:

- ❖ Learning how to think outside of the box
- ❖ Creative problem solving for challenging community problems

Below are nine dots in the shape of a square. Try to connect all nine dots using only four straight lines and without picking up your pen/pencil.





Setting the Table: Sustainability Workplan Exercise

Purpose:

This session applies what's been learned in earlier sessions to participants' workplans. The session provides participants with a way to outline and organize their project workplan.

Major Theme:

Developing a specific plan to ensure that the VISTA workplan is sustained once the VISTA grant is completed.

Using the template (page 23), please fill in the timeline starting with today's date and ending with the last month of your service year.

1. In the upper left-hand corner of the timeline write your sustainability statement. Your sustainability statement should say what program you plan to develop or sustain and how you will go about doing that. For example "The Springsteen Day Center will be a daytime shelter for the residents of Springsteen Township with medical, food, and legal facilities for participants. The Day Center will be managed by a full-time staff member, a corps of volunteers and clients." Make sure you outline what issue the program addresses, what services it provides and who will run the program when the VISTA grant is completed.
2. In the upper half of the template please write responses to the following questions about the Big Ideas:
 - a. What are the goals of your project?
 - b. What social justice ideas does your project address?
 - c. What impact do you want your project to have on your host community?
 - d. What will motivate people to become involved with your project?
 - e. What do you want to learn from the experience?
3. Identifying your stakeholders. Who needs to be involved in the project for it to become sustainable? Potential stakeholders could be your supervisor, your organization's board, clients, specific community organizations, etc. In the bottom left corner of your timeline list each stakeholder group in a different color.

4. Breaking Down the Big Ideas into Project Components:

Once you've got your big ideas then begin to organize them into projects.

- a. What are the projects within each big idea?
- b. What are the components of the project?
- c. Who would like to serve as the coordinator for each projects?
- d. What does a timetable look like for each projects?
- e. Could any of these projects work together to share resources?
- f. Deadlines for project components.
- g. How will you communicate your plan to others (clients, media, funders, etc.)?
- h. How will you evaluate your program?
- i. How will you address sustainability in your project?

Once you have discussed these components begin outlining your project on the timeline. Place project deadlines in one color and place the lead person for each component in another color and resource people in yet another color.

Things to keep in mind while writing up project timeline:

- a. What resources are needed?
- b. What resources could be shared?
- c. What training might be helpful?
- d. Are there potential partners who are not yet involved with the project?

Most important, what does your project look like at the end of your service year when you are no longer there?

Reporting Back

You will have one minute to report back on their workplan. In that minute make sure you observe the three report-back Cs: **Clear, Concise and Committed**. The one minute report should cover the following four topics:

1. Your sustainability statement;
2. A few of your Big Ideas;
3. Who your stakeholders are; and
4. What the project will look like when there is no longer a VISTA grant supporting the program.



Sample Sustainability Workplan

Sustainability Statement: *The Springsteen Day Center will be a daytime shelter for the residents of Springsteen township with medical, food, and legal facility for participants. The Day Center will be managed by a full time staff member and a corps of volunteers and clients.*

The Big Ideas

Community enlightenment on the issue of homelessness

Hope

Individualized care

Trust

One-stop-shop for client services

Social Justice

Dignity

Mobilize community resources

Quality Care

Client Empowerment

Safe Place

Compassion

Action

Collaboration

Stakeholders	January	March	May	July	September	November
VISTAs	Outline day center program. identify stakeholders	Organize community meeting to discuss Day Center	Fundraiser/Service project for Day Center	Recruit program staff (paid and volunteer to run programs in Day Center	Recruit and train volunteers to run Day Center	Organize grand opening of Day Center
Supervisor	Inform and involve board	Identify and apply for long term funding to support the Day Center.	Develop program delivery strategy for the Day Center	Work with local nonprofit network to develop a referral service for the Day Center	Hire full time staff person to run the Day Center	Take your VISTAs out for a celebratory dinner
Clients	Review program outline	Participate in community meeting	Serve as project captains for service project	Help develop recruitment material.	Run client panel as part of training opening	Help organize and attend grand opening
Community members	Letter to the editor regarding increase in homelessness	Attend community meeting and volunteer for Day Center committee	Attend fundraiser/service project with 2 friends	Identify and contact 3 local businesses for donations to the Center	Run a volunteer session on community resources	Attend grand opening and are awarded "Volunteer of the Year"



Soup for the Soul: VISTA Vision

Purpose:

This session provides participants with time to reflect upon what it is they want to sustain, personally and project-wise, from their service experience.

Major Theme:

Write a personal vision statement by articulating what you want to accomplish during your service experience.

Please write down your vision statement for your service year. Some things to consider when writing your vision statement:

- ❖ What kind of a person do you want to be during and after your service?
- ❖ What legacy do you want to leave in your community?
- ❖ Do you want to sustain your commitment to service and if so how?
- ❖ What words/actions/people serve as a reminder for the kind of person you want to be?

Some examples of famous vision statements are:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.

~Margaret Mead

What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude. Don't complain.

~Maya Angelou

We must be the change we wish to see in the world.

~Ghandi

The only thing you take with you when you're gone is what you leave behind.

~John Allston

He who has done his best for his own time has lived for all times.

~Johann von Schiller

*Go to the People,
Live with them,
Learn from them,
Love them.
Start with what they know,
Build with what they have.*

*And with the best leaders
When the work is done
the task accomplished
The people will say,
"We have done this ourselves."*

~Lao Tse

I hope, believe, and dream that national service will remain throughout the life of America, not a series of promises, but a series of challenges, across all generations and all walks of life, to help us rebuild this beautiful but troubled land.

~ President Bill Clinton



Some examples of VISTA vision statements are:

Every night when I go to sleep I dream of a new world but in the morning I wake up to start to build it.

~Juan Carlos Gastón, Mayagüez Children's Library, Puerto Rico

United in service AmeriCorps we stand. Volunteering our lives where there is demand. We strive to leave the world better than it was before. Dedicated to "Getting things Done," We are AmeriCorps!

~Thor Midby, American Red Cross, Los Angeles, California

I will see it, become it, plan it, fix it, sustain it.

~Shirley Johnson, YorkCAN, York, Pennsylvania

It is human nature to want to help, but not everyone knows how. I want to dedicate my time and energy into being the example to those that are looking for some answers.

~Heather Luker, Utah Campus Compact, Salt Lake City, Utah



Workshop Evaluation

Date of Training _____

Name of Trainer _____

1. Please circle what type of project you are working on:

health education environment public safety unmet human needs.

2. How many months have you been a (VISTA, VISTA Leader, VISTA Supervisor, CNS Staff member)?

3. On a scale of 1-5 (1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree) please rate the following:

a. The training content was appropriate to my project/individual needs.

1 2 3 4 5

b. The training gave me time to develop a sustainability strategy for my project.

1 2 3 4 5

c. The training gave me a better understanding about project sustainability.

1 2 3 4 5

d. The training gave me a better understanding about sustaining my service commitment past my service term.

1 2 3 4 5

e. I would be interested in additional sustainability trainings.

1 2 3 4 5



4. What portion of the training was most helpful to you and why:

5. What portion of the training was least helpful to you and why?

6. Were your expectations for the training met?

7. Other comments about this training or suggestions for future trainings:

Thanks for your participation.





Local Information Sources

- Town Comprehensive Plan
- Mission Statements from Local Nonprofits
- The Community Reinvestment Officer at the Local Bank
- The Chamber of Commerce
- Census Information <www.census.gov> look at how the demographics in your community have changed.
- Talk with the journalist who covers your community
- Principal of the local school
- Zoning Board
- Tenant Associations
- Civic Clubs (Rotary, Elks, etc.)
- Find out if your area has ever done a community-wide survey
- Town historian
- Former members of your organizations' board
- Foundation staff
- VISTA alums



On Line Sustainability Resources

Sustainable Seattle: <www.scn.org/sustainable/susthome.html> Listing of policies, how Seattle has organized volunteers, 1998 Sustainable Community Indicators Report, and project descriptions (Neighborhood Network Team, Policy Group, and the Seattle Guide to Sustainable Living).

Center of Excellence for Sustainable Development: <www.sustainable.doe.gov/> Site has case studies, rural and urban specific sustainability information, funding opportunities and houses toolkits for the following topics: Land Use Planning, Green Buildings, Transportation Economics, Industry, Disaster Planning, Community Development

United States Environmental Protection Agency Funding Page: <<http://134.67.55.16:7777/DC/OSECWeb.nsf/Grants?OpenView>> Comprehensive listing of foundation and governmental funding opportunities for sustainable community development. Very helpful writing tutorial included in site.

Amherst H. Wilder Foundation: <www.wilder.org/pubs/pubcatlg.html> A series of community collaboration and community building, leadership development and marketing and fundraising publications available: A sampling of their titles: Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, Organizing for Social Change, Leadership, Management, and Planning: All the Way to the Bank: Smart Money Management for Tomorrow's Nonprofit, Consulting with Nonprofits: A Practitioner's Guide, Coping with Cutbacks: The Nonprofit Guide to Success When Times Are Tight, Marketing Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations Volume I: Develop the Plan, Wilder Nonprofit Field Guide to Conducting Successful Focus Groups, Wilder Nonprofit Field Guide to Getting Started on the Internet.

The Asset-Based Community Development Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University: <<http://www.nwu.edu/IPR/abcd.html#AA>> Guide to Mapping and Mobilizing the Economic Capacities of Local

Residents (1996), A Guide to Mapping Local Business Assets and Mobilizing Local Business Capacities (1996), A Guide to Mapping Consumer Expenditures and Mobilizing Consumer Expenditure Capacities (1996), A Guide to Capacity Inventories: Mobilizing the Community Skills of Local Residents (1997), A Guide to Evaluating Asset-Based Community Development: Lessons, Challenges, and Opportunities (1997), A Guide to Creating a Neighborhood Information Exchange: Building Communities by Connecting Local Skills, and Knowledge (1998), City-Sponsored Community Building: Savannah's Grants for Blocks Story (1998), Newspapers and Neighborhoods: Strategies for Achieving Responsible Coverage of Local Communities (1999).

Sustainable Communities Network: <www.sustainable.org> Site provides a listing of sustainable development funding sources, case studies, publications on the following topics: Smart Growth, Governing Sustainability, Civic Engagement, and Community Indicators.

Center for Livable Communities:<www.lgc.org/clc/> Hotline and Referral Help 1800-290-8202

Civic Practices Network: <www.cpn.org/index.html> Civic Practices Network (CPN) Center for Human Resources, Heller School for Advanced Studies in Social Welfare/Brandeis University/ 60 Turner Street/Waltham, MA 02154/ Phone: (617) 736-4890. *Community Manuals* (i.e.: Community Building in Public Housing: The Ties that Bind People and their Communities, Planning Community-Wide Study Circle Programs: A Step-by-Step Guide, The Busy Citizen's Discussion Guide: Violence in Our Communities, Building Communities From The Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets, The Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook) Environmental Manuals, Networking Manuals, Family, Gender and Children's Manuals, Work and Empowerment Manuals, and Youth Education Manuals.



National Town Meeting for a Sustainable America: <www.sustainableusa.org/>

Some interesting best practices profiles on youth, environmental and housing programs.

Community Research network (Loka Institute): <www.loka.org/crn/index.htm>

Great linking page for a variety of social issues ranging from health to the environment to agricultural issues. Also, the site houses a comprehensive issue database and listing of funding sources.

Kellogg collection of community development resources: <www.unl.edu/kellogg/index.html>

A comprehensive database of community development guidebooks, manuals, workshop materials, reports, books, and videos. Useful for rural, urban, and suburban topics.

